

The Gramophone Shop, Inc.

Record Supplement

for

January, 1945

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NEW YORK 17, N. Y.

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AS	L'Anthologie Sonore	GT	Gamut
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BA	Bost	K	Keynote
C	Columbia	MS	Sonora
CM	Columbia Masterworks Set	MW	Hargail Recorder
CON	Continental	NMR	New Music Recordings
CX	Columbia Two-Record Masterworks Set	P	Parlophone
D	Decca	PAR	Paraclete
ES	Bost	SON	Sonart
G	Gramophone (HMV)	V	Victor
		VM	Victor Masterpiece Set

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THE GRAMOPHONE SHOP, Inc.

18 EAST 48th STREET

NEW YORK 17, N. Y.

290 PARK AVENUE

The Gramophone Shop, Inc.

*The World's Best Recorded Music
The Finest in Musical Reproduction*

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Vol. VIII

Record Supplement for January, 1945

No. 1

BACH (JOHANN SEBASTIAN)

BACH-GOUNOD: Ave Maria & SCHUBERT-

WILHELMJ: Ave Maria. Andre Kostelanetz and his Orchestra. 12" record (2 sides), No. C-7416 M; price \$1.05.

What should certainly be one of the most popular couplings of these two favorite selections has been released by Columbia. Recorded shortly after the record ban was lifted, these pieces have been frequently requested by service men overseas as well as by the general public. The lush Kostelanetz style is well applied here. Resonant reproduction and perfect string precision combine to make an attractive popular disc.

BACH: Prelude & Fugue in E minor (Biggs' Vol. III, No. 10). E. Power Biggs (Baroque Organ of the Germanic Museum of Harvard University). 10" record (2 sides), No. V-10-1121; price \$.79.

Known among musicologists as the "Cathedral" prelude, this work should not be confused with the "great" prelude and fugue in the same key, the one ending with the "Wedge" fugue.

This disc provides a welcome change from the many orchestral transcriptions so prevalent today. E. Power Biggs' carefully restrained playing maintains the melodic line without sacrificing any interest in the work. The Baroque organ of the Germanic Museum of Harvard is an excellent instrument for recording, for the registra-

tions are never clouded or blurred by excessive reverberation. The ponderous overtones of the 19th century concert organ are fortunately absent, so the work emerges with architectural clarity. Previous versions by Schweitzer, Bachem and Vierné have been discontinued, and the Commette version (C-17243D), which has been out of stock for some time, is marred by echoes of the cathedral in which it was recorded.

BACH: In Quiet Faith I Lie; Come Sweetest Death; Be Thou With Me Isobel Baillie (soprano, in English) & Bertram Harrison (organ). 12" imported recording (2 sides), No. C-DX1133; price \$2.10.

The three Bach songs, done in an English translation are *Ich halte treulich still* and *Komm, süßer Tod*, Nos. 30 and 42 from the Schemelli Song Book and *Bist du bei mir*, No. 25 in the Anna Magdalena Bach Notebook.

Isobel Baillie, the possessor of one of the most extraordinary voices for oratorio singing, turns her attention to the songs of Bach with great success. Her big, powerful voice has seldom been heard to better advantage. There is plenty of room resonance, as in most of the English vocal records, but none of the shrillness that occasionally accompanies it. The resonance does not tend to obscure her diction in this record as it had in some of her past releases. The organ accompaniment is played with proper restraint by Bertram Harrison.

Previously available versions of the *Komm, süßer Tod* are matched by this beautifully controlled singing, even though the English text is used. In the case of *Bist du bei mir*, however, there is the Elisabeth Schumann version to contend with, and it is to Miss Baille's credit that she does not fall far behind that unequalled version, sung in German. The quantity of this imported disc is strictly limited.

BENHAM (EARL)

BENHAM: Curley Locks & WARREN: Christmas Candle. John Charles Thomas (baritone) and Carol Hollister (piano). 10" record (2 sides), No. V-10-1119; price \$.79.

Faithful reproduction and sympathetic piano accompaniments are the primary virtues of this record of two encore selections by the perennial favorite of the concert, radio and operatic stage, John Charles Thomas.

BERLIN (IRVING)

BERLIN: White Christmas (from "Holiday Inn") & HERBERT: A La Valse. Jascha Heifetz (violin) with orchestra directed by Camarata and with Milton Kaye (piano). 10" record (2 sides), No. D-23376; price \$.79.

In his first release for Decca, Jascha Heifetz plays the seasonal "White Christmas" from the score of Irving Berlin's film of a few seasons ago, "Holiday Inn." Played straight with no frills, the performance is admirable in every way, for the orchestra is well recorded and the surfaces are quiet. On the reverse side is a Victor Herbert selection, "A La Valse" which has a piano accompaniment by Milton Kaye.

BIZET (GEORGES)

BIZET (Arr. Russell Bennet): Carmen Jones-Beat Out Dat Rhythm on a Drum & ARLEN: Bloomer Girl-Right as the Rain. Gladys Swarthout mezzo-soprano with chorus and orchestra conducted by Jay Blackton. 10" record (2 sides) V-10-1128; price \$.79.

A single record from the Michael Todd modernized version of *Carmen*, this disc brings us the *Chanson Bohème* from the beginning of Act II, as arranged by Russell Bennet, with new lyrics Oscar Hammerstein II as sung by the contralto of the Metropolitan Opera, Gladys Swarthout. *Carmen* is no new role to this singer, so she brings to the song a certain amount of authority as well as a first class voice. On the reverse side is "Right as the Rain," which is rapidly becoming one of the hits of the musical show *Bloomer Girl*. Both are spaciouly recorded and in the *Carmen* selection the singer is joined by a chorus.

DARGOMIJSKY (ALEXANDER SERGEIVICH)

DARGOMIJSKY: Roussalka-Act III, Mad Scene & Death of the Miller. Feodor Chaliapin (bass, in Russian), G. Pozemkovsky (tenor) & Orchestra conducted by M. Steinmann. 12" record (2 sides), No. V-11-8695; price \$1.05.

The Russian composer and pianist Dargomjisky (1813-1869) studied with Glinka and adopted many of that composer's musical ideas. Very few of his operas are performed with any degree of regularity outside of Russia today, because of their intense national character.

His most famous work, *Roussalka* (*The Water Sprite*, or *The Mermaid*) had as its libretto Pushkin's dramatic legend. Finished in 1853 and first produced at the Marensky Theatre in St. Petersburg in 1856, the work proved too novel in form and content to please a public brought up on the conventions and melodies of Italian opera. Strange as it sounds, the opera was too Russian for the Russians. He found his first sympathetic hearing, as did many other Russian composers in the theatres and opera houses of Belgium.

The opera possesses a distinctly national character and considerable dramatic effectiveness which even came across the footlights at a concert version given in New York a few years ago.

There are no recordings of the work available today, since the "Ballet Music," once recorded by Dorati and the London Philharmonic, and the "Miller's Aria," sung by Chaliapin have both been withdrawn. The present selection is drawn from the third act, in which the crazed miller Melnick flings the betrayer of his daughter Natasha into the millstream and then kills himself.

Chaliapin's characterization of Melnick was among his most famous roles, so Victor should be commended for releasing this impressive souvenir of the great basso who died in 1938. Although the recording is not new, it has stood the test of time well, for the orchestra and voice emerge with plenty of realism and dramatic impact. It may be noted that this was once available on the European label, but has been discontinued in England.

DEBUSSY (CLAUDE ACHILLE)

DEBUSSY: Suite Bergamasque-Prelude & Minuet only. E. Robert Schmitz (piano). 12" record (2 sides), No. V-11-8694; price \$1.05.

E. Robert Schmitz, the distinguished French pianist and teacher, plays two selections from the *Suite Bergamasque* of Debussy, thus adding to his growing list of records. On a previous disc (V-11-8240) he played the famous "Clair de lune" from the same suite, so it may not be too much to expect that he will some day record the final "Passepied," thus completing the first Victor performance of this magical music.

Although he has some stiff competition from Gieseking, who has performed the complete suite for Columbia, Mr. Schmitz is more than able to hold his own, because he is one of the few authentic interpreters of French impressionists. The accents and idiom of French music are such that few can play it with any distinctive style, and since Mr. Schmitz has been active in French musical circles since 1912, he is especially suited for the role of interpreter.

GOULD (MORTON)

GOULD: Boogie Woogie Etude & Blues (from "American Concertette"). José Iturbi (piano). 10" record (2 sides), No. V-10-1127; price \$.79.

Boogie Woogie Etude, written by Morton Gould for Mr. Iturbi, had its premier in July 1943 over a radio network under Mr. Gould's direction. The reverse side contains one movement of Mr. Gould's "American Concertette," of which Mr. Iturbi played the world premiere.

The jazzy *Boogie Woogie Etude* and the slow nostalgic *Blues* offer an interesting contrast in moods, and Mr. Iturbi adapts himself to the idiom with fine style. He plays with his customary skill, accuracy and remarkable rhythmic feeling.

It is interesting to note that this record was made in New York on November 12, last year, not many hours after the recording ban had been lifted.

GOUNOD (CHARLES)

GOUNOD: Ave Maria. See BACH-GOUNOD: *Ave Maria*.

GRANDJANY (MARCEL)

GRANDJANY: Automne & GRETCHANINOFF.

GRANDJANY: Allegro Vivace (Finale from Piano Sonata in G minor, Op. 129). Marcel Grandjany (harp). 10" record (2 sides), No. V-10-1120; price \$.79.

The celebrated harp virtuoso Marcel Grandjany plays his own composition *Automne* a pleasant composition in the French impressionist style. The Gretchaninoff selection is an arrangement for harp of the finale of the *Piano Sonata in G minor, Op. 129*, in which the amazing resources of the instrument are displayed. It receives a sympathetic performance which has been brightly recorded.

HANDEL (GEORGE FREDERICK)

HANDEL: The Messiah-No. 24, Behold the Lamb of God & No. 46, Hallelujah Chorus. Sadler's Wells Chorus and Orchestra conducted by Warwick Braithwaite. 12" record (2 sides), No. V-11-8670; price \$1.05.

There has long been a need for a new recording of these two popular selections, because the performance in the complete set is fairly dated from the point of view of recorded sound. The oldish Royal Choral Society records are still serviceable, but alongside this new release, they sound dated. There is plenty of hall resonance in the new performance, but every word is easily understandable, and the orchestra is reproduced with incredible realism. The *Hallelujah Chorus* emerges in all its glory from this disc. Surely the dynamics here are almost as great as those in the incredibly brilliant *Belshazzar's Feast*, released a few months ago.

In contrast we have the beautifully solemn chorus *Behold the Lamb of God* on the reverse side. This also receives a perfect rendition by this well disciplined choral organization.

PUCCINI (GIACOMO)

PUCCINI: La Bohème—Excerpts. Soloists, Chorus and Orchestra of La Scala, Milan, conducted by Umberto Berrettoni. Five 12" records (10 sides) in Set VM-980†; price complete with album \$6.03.

The excerpts in this album of selections entitled "The Heart of La Bohème" are drawn from the recording already in the Victor catalogue, Sets VM-518/9 and have been placed in a special album with a six page album liner which lists the cast of characters, describes Puccini's career, and outlines the plot, as well as reproducing the text and a line by line translation.

The opera is an adaptation of part of Henri Murger's *Scenes de la Vie de Bohème*, which depicts life in the Quartier Latin, or the Student's Quarter of Paris, in 1830. Since it was impossible to weave a complete story from Murger's novel, the librettists Giacosa and Illica merely took four of the principal scenes and several of Murger's characters and strung them together without much regard for unity.

The cast in the performance is a brilliant one which includes many favorites. They are:

Rodolfo	Beniamino Gigli
Mimi	Licia Albanese
Musetta	Tatiana Menotti
Marcello	Afro Poli
Colline	Duilio Baronti
Schaunard	Aristide Baracchi

Unusually good taste was shown in the selection of excerpts. They include most of the best music of the opera.

Act I

Che gelida manina

" *Si, mi chiamano Mimi*

Eh! Rodolfo! . . . O soave fanciulla

Act II

Quando me'n vo' (Musetta's Waltz Song)

Act III

Addio! . . . Donde lieta uscì

Dunque e proprio finita (Quartet)

Act IV

In un coupé

Sono andati

Torno al nido la rondine

Dormi? Riposa

The cast acquits itself in true Italian style. All the singers, with the possible exception of Albanese have been recorded well, and for some reason her voice emerges strident and harsh. However, this blemish does not prevent this recordrama from being the best yet to be released. In years past European companies released abridged versions of their complete operas, so it is not without precedent that Victor does this.

STRAUSS (JOHANN JR., JOHANN, SR., EDUARD, JOSEF)

STRAUSS: Medley of Waltzes, "Kings of the Waltz." London Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Walter Goehr. 12" record (2 sides), No. V-11-8696; price \$1.05.

Excerpts from seven waltzes by members of the Strauss family are heard in this enchanting disc. Bits of the *Emperor Waltz*, *Wine, Women and Song*, *Southern Roses* and *Die Fledermaus* of Johann Strauss, Jr., the *Loreley Waltz* of Johann Strauss, Sr., the *Doctrinen Waltz* of Eduard Strauss and the *Delirien Waltz* of Joseph Strauss are blended together to make one of the best medleys heard in a long time. More than a little of each waltz is heard, for the orchestra plays crisply under the knowing direction of Walter Goehr, who does not sentimentalize. The orchestra has been recorded with clarity and depth.

VIVALDI (ANTONIO)

VIVALDI: Sonata in D major for violin and piano (arr. Respighi). Erica Morini (violin) & Max Lanner (piano). 12" record (2 sides), No. V-11-8671; price \$1.05.

The Venitian composer and violinist Antonio Vivaldi (1675-1747), called the "Red Priest" because of the color of his hair, received his first musical instruction from his father who was a violinist in the ducal chapel of St. Mark's Cathedral. He was ordained a priest but a

nervous ailment prevented him from following his vocation.

From 1707 to 1713 he was director of a chapel at Mantua in the service of Philip, Landgraf of Hesse-Darmstadt, then resident in Italy. Then in 1714 he was appointed director of the Seminario Musicale dell'Ospitale della Pietà, whose orchestra composed entirely of girl students was considered the finest in Venice. In addition to these duties he was leading violinist in St. Marks Cathedral. Carlo Goldoni, in his famous memoirs tells of meeting this bizarre artist.

His instrumental and dramatic works (including trios, sonatas, concertos and operas) made him respected as a composer extremely skillful in thematic development. Some of his violin concertos were transcribed for clavier by Johann Sebastian Bach, who admired and studied his works.

The D major sonata here recorded is apparently one in a volume published by Ricordi in 1908 entitled "Nine Sonatas of the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries" arranged for violin and piano by Ottorino Respighi, which contains compositions of Vivaldi, Porpora, Locatelli, Tartini, Pastorale, Valentini and Veracini. The volume is not available for checking the origin of the sonata, which does not appear in the thematic catalogue of Vivaldi's works. As many of his compositions are still in manuscript, it is possible that this work has not been catalogued as yet. In any event it is a melodious vivacious work played with a fine sense of style by Erica Morini, whose tone is constantly bright and clear. A good balance has been maintained between the violin and the piano. A previous version by Milstein has been withdrawn, so is not available for comparison.

The four movements are marked: *Moderato*, *Allegro moderato*, *Largo* and *Vivace*.

WARREN (ELINOR REMICK)

WARREN: Christmas Candle. See BENHAM: Curley Locks.



COLLECTIONS

ENCORES. Andor Földes (piano). Three 10" records (6 sides) in Set CON-22; price complete with album \$2.89.

Andor Foldes, a pupil of the eminent Hungarian pianist and composer Ernst von Dohnanyi, started his musical career in 1921 at the age of 8 when he made his first concert appearance as soloist with the Royal Hungarian Philharmonic Orchestra in Budapest. After concert appearances in Europe, Mr. Foldes came to this country in 1939, and continued to display his talents as a pianist. He was also Josef Szigeti's accompanist, and in that capacity is represented by a few albums on Columbia. This album of encores, however, is his first solo appearance on records as far as we can trace. The contents are:

Brahms: Three Waltzes from Op. 39

Liszt: Valse oubliée No. 1

Chopin: Prelude in C major, Op. 28, No. 1

Chopin: Mazurka in C sharp minor, Op. 63, No. 3

Debussy: La fille aux cheveux de lin

Gershwin: Prelude No. 1 in B flat major

Prokofiev: March from "Love for Three Oranges"

Shostakovich: Polka from "Age of Gold"

Shostakovich: Fantastic Dance

Although there are other versions available of most of these selections except the Liszt Valse Oubliée and the Shostakovich Fantastic Dance. Mr. Foldes plays them with such a thorough grasp of musical styles that one can forgive duplications.

The album should be popular because all the works are interesting without being hackneyed. The recording, while not up to the standards of the larger companies, is nonetheless more than adequate.

DICTION

SHAKESPEARE: Othello (Substantially complete).

Cast of the Theatre Guild Production. Seventeen 12" records (34 sides, 3 volumes) in Set CM-544†; price complete with albums \$19.43.

The cast in the recording is as follows:

Othello.....Paul Robeson
Iago.....José Ferrer
Desdemona.....Uta Hagen
Emilia.....Edith King

Cassio }
Brabantio }Alexander Scourby

Rodrigo.....Jack Manning
Bianca.....Grace Coppin

Ludovico }
Montano }Philip Houston

Gratiano }
Duke of Venice }Ainsworth Arnold

All the important scenes from Shakespeare's *Othello* have been recorded by a distinguished cast. The slight omissions are: Act II, beginning of scene I, all of the short second scene and the first few lines of scene 3 Act III, The short and unimportant scenes 1 and 2 and the beginning of scene III. Act V, scene I.

Minor cuts are made in many speeches, but never of important material. The play is given straight, without any narration or scene setting as in the Orson Welles Mercury Theatre records. The recording is more on the order of the Maurice Evans album of *Richard II*, except that more material is presented. Thus we have for the first time a substantially complete recording of a performance of a Shakespearean play.

The voice of José Ferrer is most successful. His Iago has developed into a genuine dramatic character since he first played the part three or four years ago. Less successful is Paul Robeson. There is certainly more poetry and feeling in the lines than he seems to find. This does not mean that his Othello is not great, but rather, he should be more of the tragic hero, as Shakespeare intended him to portray. Uta Hagen's Desdemona is still fresh and unspoiled on records. Her innocence and womanliness are most effectively conveyed.

The recording is clear and lifelike, and should please speech enthusiasts. Schools, speech students and ordinary collectors should be interested in these albums.

CHORAL RECITATION. Neville House, Eastbourne, Verse Speaking Choir conducted by E. L. Lansing. 10" imported record (2 sides), No. G-B8801; price \$1.57.

This discontinued disc is being listed for the benefit of those who like choral readings. A few copies are in stock at the present time and when they are gone there are not likely to be any more. The youthful voices sound well in these poems. The recording is crystal clear, and the imported surfaces are a constant pleasure.

The poems included are:

Frances Chesterton: How far is it to Bethlehem

Henry Kingsley: The Blackbird's Song

Elinor Farjeon: The Children's Bells

H. H. Bashford: Where do the Gypsies come from?

Vachel Lindsey: A dirge for a Righteous kitten

Christina Rossetti: From "The Goblin Market"

SPANISH LANGUAGE COURSE: Decca Spanish Series. Sixteen 10" records (16 sides); price complete with two albums, study book, text book and Spanish-English Dictionary \$41.50.

Decca's Spanish Course is really a play, a light mystery drama, *Las Aventuras de Roberto Martin*, written by the director and supervisor of the Series, Dr. Lester Gilbert Krakeur, in conjunction with Miss Isabel Brugada. The first part of the course is paced slowly, with the cast employing simple words and sentences. Gradually the pace is quickened as the story develops and the student gets better acquainted with the language. Towards the end conversational speed is developed. The ground covered is supposed to be the equivalent of a two year high school course.

The set consists of sixteen records carrying the full 32 parts of the course, recorded by an outstanding cast of Spanish speaking stars of the theatre, films and radio. The text of the play is reproduced in book form and accompanies the records as does a carefully planned study book containing notes on the words and idioms used in the play as well as grammar lessons and exercises. In addition a Spanish-English dictionary containing more than 50,000 word is furnished.

POPULAR RECORDS

FOLKSAY I. American Folk Songs and Dances.

Woodie Guthrie, Cisco Houston, Pete Seegar, Baldwin Hawes, Bess Lomax, Blind Sonny Terry and Alex, Josh White, Leadbelly (vocals), with guitars, banjo and hot fiddle. Three 10" records (6 sides) in Set ASCH-A432; price complete with album \$2.89.

A collection of songs with a blending of blues and ragtime, negro jazz and white, this album contains the following:

Mule Skinner's Blue (Work Blues)

900 Miles (Railroad Song)

Poor Lazarus (Bad Man Ballad)

Biggest Thing (Nonsense Ballad)

Don't Lie Buddy (Answer Back Song)

Cindy (Country Dance)

Who's Gonna Shoe Your Pretty Little Feet (Tennessee Mountain Song)

Sung by various soloists and combinations, these records make an attractive addition to the rapidly expanding repertory of folk music available at the present time. Texts of the songs as well as notes by Woodie Guthrie are enclosed with each album.

POLKA WITH THE POLKATEERS. Fred Novak and the Polkateers with Len Stokes (baritone).

Five 10" records (10 sides) in Set MC-61; price complete with album \$4.46.

This album contains the following: **Mama Polka; Papa Polka; Whistling Waltz; Continental Swing Waltz; Stop Polka; Showin' Off Polka; Stomp Polka; Rag the Scale Polka; Polka, Polka; Betsy Polka.**

BLOOMER GIRL. Selections from the Musical Comedy with members of the Original New York Production including Celeste Holm, David Brooks, Richard Huey, Joan McCracken, Dooley Wilson, Harold Arlen, Matt Briggs, Toni Hart, Mable Tagliaferro, Daughters and Sons-in-Law, "Bloomer Girl" Orchestra and Chorus directed by Leon Leonardi. Eight 10" records (16 sides) in Set D-DA381; price complete with album \$6.82.

A fairly complete resumé of the score of the Harold Arlen-E. Y. Harburg musical comedy, this album contains the following selections: **When the Boys Come Home; Evalina; Welcome Hinges; The Farmer's Daughter; It Was Good Enough for Grandma; The Eagle and Me; Right as the Rain; T'morra', T'morra'; The Rakish Young Man With the Whiskers; Sunday in Cicero Falls (2 parts); I Got a Song (2 parts), Satin Gown and Silver Shoe (Lullaby); Liza Crossing the Ice; Never Was Born; Man For Sale; Finale.**

Decca has lost no time in releasing a collection of the hit songs from this delightful score. Recapturing the vivacity of his show about an earlier American scene, this set affords a perfect escape for an hour or so from war worries.

Those who enjoyed Celeste Holm's characterization of Ado Annie in Oklahoma will find more to delight them in this show in which she has the leading role of Evalina. Joan McCracken's "T'morra, T'morra," which stops the show is one of many hits in this album. "I Got a Song" has all the authentic feeling of a negro folk tune. "Right as the Rain" seem to be heading towards top place on the hit parade.

The recording is well up to the high standard set in the recent albums of show hits.

MUSIC OF THE ORIENT. Mediterranean Suite,

by Alexander Maloof. Maloof Oriental Orchestra

conducted by the composer. Four 10" records (8 sides) in Set CON-19; price complete with album \$3.67.

Alexander Maloof has become popular as a composer and conductor of oriental music, and in these records directs his own orchestra composed of authentic oriental musicians. The 8 selections recorded are entitled: **Tunisia, Obelisque, Salome, Lebenese, Morocco, Valse Egyptienne, Trip to Syria, Fatima.** The music is diverting and should fill a gap in the small list of oriental music available today.

JAZZ

We have received some 12" BLUE NOTE records, in addition to those listed in the October SUPPLEMENT. They are priced at \$1.57 each.

BN-3: Mighty Blues & Rocking the Blues. Port of Harlem Jazz Men (Frank Newton—trumpet, J. C. Higgenbotham—trombone, Albert Ammons—piano, Teddy Bunn—guitar, John Williams—bass, Sidney Catlett—drums).

BN-5: The Father's Getaway & Reminiscing at Blue Note. Earl "Father" Hines (piano).

BN-29: Royal Garden Blues & Night Shift Blues. Edmond Hall's Blue Note Jazz Men (Edmond Hall—clarinet, Sidney de Paris—trumpet, Vic Dickenson—trombone, James P. Johnson—piano, Arthur Shirley—guitar, Israel Crosby—bass, Sidney Catlett—drums).

BN-33: After You've Gone & Joy-Mentin'. James P. Johnson's Blue Note Jazz Men. (Sidney de Paris—trumpet, Vic Dickenson—trombone, Ben Webster—tenor saxophone, James P. Johnson—piano, Arthur Shirley—guitar, John Simmons—bass, Sidney Catlett—drums).

BN-38: She's Funny That Way & Indiana. Ike Quebec Quintet (Ike Quebec—tenor saxophone, Roger Ramirez—piano, Tiny Grimes—guitar, Milton Hinton—bass, J. C. Heard—drums).

BN-39: Chicago Flyer & Blues Whistle. Meade "Lux" Lewis (piano).

BOOK REVIEWS

WHAT IS MUSIC. John Erskine. 212 pages. J. B. Lippincott Company. Philadelphia & New York City. N. Y., 1944. \$2.75.

The famous novelist and musician, John Erskine has written his first book on music appreciation. His aim is "to make the love of music a little more intelligent," through an attempt to define it and indicate its historical and social importance.

In the first chapters he discusses the different kinds of music, and what they are made of, musical notations and musical instruments. In the second section Mr. Erskine sketches the relation of music to society, with discussions of a career in music, of performers, of teachers, of composers and finally of critics. The splendid bibliography is as complete as one would want for such a subject.

The volume may be recommended for the average music lover as well as the student, for it is one of the more lucid books on music appreciation in general that have appeared in recent months. There is little that is subjective in the treatment of the subject, in contrast to other books by amateur musicians. Mr. Erskine's background as a pianist, as one-time president of Juilliard School of Music and as chairman of the Management Committee of the Metropolitan Opera Association make him eminently authoritative in his present capacity as musician.

MUSIC FOR THE MILLIONS: The Encyclopedia of Musical Masterpieces. David Ewen. 673 pages. Arco Publishing Company, New York City, N. Y., 1944. \$5.00.

David Ewen has compiled an encyclopedia containing brief biographies of composers and notes on their best known compositions. At the end of each article there is a list of recommended recordings, but unfortunately, many are out of print at the present time.

Written in an easy lucid style, this volume is evidently meant for the beginner, for the radio audience, for the casual concert goer, rather than the serious musician, for many important composers are completely omitted or are barely mentioned. Many have obviously been ignored because their compositions have not been recorded and are seldom performed in the concert hall. Men like Johann Christian Bach, William Byrd, Boccherini, Grétry, Glière, Lotti, Dargomijsky, Mehul, Praetorius, Victoria and many of the modern English composers are fairly important and should have had some space devoted to them, but then, no anthology or encyclopedia can please everybody. In contrast, however, there are 2 pages devoted to Castelnuovo-Tedesco, 2 to Malipiero, 4½ to Pizzetti, 2 to Florent Schmitt and 2 to Martinu. Surely these composers are not as important as some of the earlier musicians.

The usual index is supplemented by a select bibliography which includes dictionaries encyclopedias, program notes, general histories of music, histories of periods, trends and schools, and collective and individual biographies.

AGAIN IN STOCK

GRAMOPHONE SHOP "VARIETIES" (Exclusive with The Gramophone Shop)

The Inimitable BEATRICE LILLIE with Sam Walsh at the piano. 10"; \$1.00 Each.

There are Fairies at the Bottom of Our Garden & Snoops the Lawyer. GSV-1002.

I'm a Camp Fire Girl & He Was a Gentleman. GSV-1003.



SECOND REVIEWS

BACH (JOHANN SEBASTIAN)

BACH: Toccatas and Fugues. Carl Weinrich (Praetorius Organ of the Westminster Choir College Princeton, N. J.) Two volumes, Vol. I—Four 12" records (8 sides) in Set MC-36; price complete with album \$4.50; Vol. II—Three 12" records (6 sides) in Set MC-37; price complete with album \$3.50.

The complete Organ Toccatas and Fugues of Bach are included in these two albums. The contents are:

Vol. I:

Toccatas and Fugue in D minor (Peters Vol. IV, No. 4)

Toccatas and Fugue in F major (Peters Vol. III, No. 2)

Toccatas (with Two Fugues) in E major (Peters Vol. III, No. 7)

Vol. II:

Toccatas, Adagio and Fugue in C major (Peters Vol. III, No. 8)

"Dorian" Toccatas and Fugue in D minor (Peters Vol. III, No. 3)

Carl Weinrich's splendidly energetic performances of the complete Toccatas and Fugues of Johann Sebastian Bach are again in stock in automatic sequence only. The organ chosen for the recordings was the "Praetorius" instrument at the Westminster Choir School of Princeton, N. J. Built after thorough study and research, this organ was closely patterned after those described by Praetorius in his *Syntagma Musicum*, a valuable work on musical history published in 1619. There is little of the muddiness and echo usually associated with the organs of the later 18th and 19th centuries. Here every register stands out clearly and independently.

It is interesting to note that the magnificent Toccatas with two Fugues in E major is listed as a Prelude with two Fugues and has been transcribed to C major in Peters (Vol. III, No. 7).

In any event, these performances on an authentic instrument show off the organ works of Bach in an entirely different light. Mr. Weinrich's performances are beyond reproach as is the recording.

BRAHMS (JOHANNES)

BRAHMS: Liebeslieder Walzer, Op. 52. Florence Vickland (soprano), Evelyn MacGregor (contralto), William Hain (tenor), Crane Calder (bass), Grace Castagnetta & Milton Kaye (piano). Three 12" records (6 sides) in Set MC-14; price complete with album \$3.50.

The 18 *Liebeslieder Waltzes*, begun in 1868 and finished the following year, were written for piano (4 hands) and vocal quartet. The text is taken from a work by G. F. Daumer called *Polydora*, and is typical of most of the texts of the Romantic poets.

The *Waltzes* were first performed at a subscription concert of the Karlsruhe Court Orchestra on October 6, 1869, and were so favorably received, Brahms composed a second set a few years later, the *Neue Liebeslieder Walzer*, Op. 65.

Written in the form of a waltz suite, the piano is quite independent of the voices. The performance is uniformly fine, although none of the voices is really first rate. However, a fine ensemble has been maintained throughout, and an excellent balance has been maintained between the voices and the piano. The only other vocal version, an imported set by a group of singers under the direction of Nadia Boulanger, has not been obtainable for some time, and the orchestral transcription by Frederick Hermann played by Frank Black and the NBC String Orchestra (in VM-455) can hardly be compared to the original scoring.

The recording is available in automatic couplings only.

BRUCKNER (ANTON)

BRUCKNER: Overture in G minor (3 sides) & **GLINKA:** *Ruslan and Ludmilla*-Overture (1 side). Queen's Hall Orchestra conducted by Sir Henry Wood. Two 12" records in Set D-7; price complete with album \$2.62.

We have been fortunate to receive a limited number of the Decca recording of Bruckner's early *Overture in G minor*. This seldom performed composition, written in 1863, is one of his first big independent works, preceding the *First Symphony* by a few years. It is played in this recording in the edition of A. Orel. Melodious

music, delightfully performed by one of England's great conductors, the late Sir Henry Wood, this album should make a fine edition to any collection.

A rousing performance of the popular overture to Glinka's opera *Ruslan and Ludmilla* completes the album, which is available in manual sequence only.

CHOPIN (FREDERIC)

CHOPIN: Four Ballades. Alfred Cortot (piano).

Four 12" records (8 sides) in Set VDM-399; price complete with album \$4.72.

The *Ballade*, like many musical forms may be traced to Italy for its origin. In medieval Italy, a song in dance measures was called a *balletta*, derived from *ballare*—to dance, and in medieval England, the minstrels sang long narrative poems called *ballads*. In modern music the term *ballad* is usually associated with songs that have dramatic texts in narrative form, such as the songs of Edward Loewe, and even a few of Schubert's, such as *Der Erlkönig*. The word has also been used as the title of instrumental composition of indefinite musical form portraying romantic or dramatic ideas or moods. Chopin invented the form now associated with the *Ballades* when he wrote these four compositions inspired by poems of his compatriot Adam Mickiewicz (1789-1855). Chopin's *Ballades* differ from those of Brahms' because they have more lyric beauty and less of the sinister mood of the Gothic Romances which permeates the later composer's works in this form.

The *Ballade* No. 1, in G minor, Op. 23 (1836) is based on the poem of Mickiewicz entitled *Konrad Wallenrod*. Cortot's sensitive phrasing and incisive rhythmic patterns fully reveal the composer's meaning without distorting the romantic side of his form.

No. 2, in F major, Op. 38 (1838) contains some of Cortot's finest playing on records. The powerful finale is recorded with amazing fidelity. There is little opportunity to hear this composition in the concert hall because its technical difficulties have prevented it from becoming popular with pianists. The Mickiewicz poem *Le Lac de Willis* provided the inspiration for the work.

No. 3, in A flat major, Op. 47 (1841) is probably the most famous of the group. Piano students might find it interesting to compare this work, inspired by Mickiewicz's *Ondine* with the compositions of that name by Ravel and Debussy.

No. 4, in F minor, Op. 52 (1847) is one of the very finest of all pieces in the literature of the piano. Its technical difficulties and profound musical content reveal a fiery and virile Chopin, far different from the salon pianist of popular conception.

The recordings of these "passionate epics" by Cortot are among the finest he has ever put on wax. They reveal him as a musician of the first rank, despite the many new pianists who have come before the public in recent years.

These are the only recordings available at the present time, as single versions are out of stock or have been discontinued or are otherwise unobtainable. A previous recording by Casadesus was once available on domestic Columbia, but this set has been withdrawn because of age, and the Raoul Koczalski performances on Polydor have not been available in this country.

MOZART (WOLFGANG AMADEUS)

MOZART: Concerto No. 24 in C minor, K. 491, for Piano and Orchestra. Robert Casadesus (piano) and Paris Symphony Orchestra conducted by Eugène Bigot (7 sides) & Rondo in D major, K. 485. Robert Casadesus (piano solo). Four 12" records in Set CM-356†; price complete with album \$4.73.

Composed in 1786, the same year that saw the completion of the opera *Le Nozze di Figaro* and the *Prague Symphony*, this concerto is notable for being one of but two in a minor key, the other being the famous one in D minor, K. 466. This concerto has always been one of the most popular with pianists and public alike, for it gives the performer an excellent opportunity to display his talents. Its stormy introduction is one of the most exciting moments in any of the concertos, and its deeply contemplative second movement is certainly one of the most difficult to play well, for the simple, childlike melody is particularly difficult to make sing as it should.

The Casadesus recording of this popular work is being reissued in a decorated album this month by Columbia. Always one of the French-American pianist's most ingratiating performances, this composition gives him a chance to display his extraordinary technique, which has seldom been heard to better advantage. The recording is unusually clear, and may be recommended as being one of the better Columbia piano concertos.

TCHAIKOVSKY (PETER ILYCH)

TCHAIKOVSKY: *Caprice Italien* (3 sides) & *Eugene Onegin-Polonaise* (1 side). Berlin State Opera Orchestra conducted by Alois Melichar. Two imported 12" records, Nos. D-LY6066/7; price \$2.64 the pair.

We have a few remaining copies of the well integrated Melichar performance of the ever popular *Caprice Italien*. The conductor captures a good deal of the Latin flavor of one of the Russian composer's most melodious scores. The recording is up to fine continental standards, having the resonance of most of the recordings made by this orchestra.

On the reverse side is a super-brilliant rendition of the *Polonaise* from the opera *Eugene Onegin*.

TCHAIKOVSKY: *Swan Lake-Ballet, Op. 20-Excerpts*. London Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Antal Dorati. Four 12" records (8 sides) in Set CM-349; price complete with album \$4.73.

The first performance of the popular *Swan Lake* Ballet which took place at the Great Theatre, Moscow on March 4, 1877 was a failure, because of an inefficient conductor, inadequate scenery and costumes, mediocre choreography and the absence of first rate dancers. After Tchaikovsky's death, Marius Petipa, the famous maitre de ballet, produced the second act in 1894 and on January 7, the following year, produced the complete ballet at the Marensky Theatre, St. Petersburg. It has remained in the active repertory in Russia ever since. Today, however, only the Second Act is performed in the United States, with an occasional revival of one of the other acts.

The music contained in these records comes from all four acts, some used in current productions, some generally omitted. The numbers in the order they occur in the ballet are:

Act I, No. 1, Introduction (Side 1)

No. 2, Dance of the Prince (Side 3)

Act II, No. 13, Dance of the Queen of the Swans (Side 2)

No. 14, Dance of the Little Swans (Side 5)

Nos. 16 & 17, Scene and Coda (Side 3)

Act III, No. 20, Scene and Waltz (Side 4)

No. 22, Spanish Dance (Side 5)

No. 25 Mazurka (Side 6)

Act IV, No. 31, Dance of the Cygnets (Side 7)

No. 33, Final Scene (Side 8)

The recording is in the bright, open, theatrical style so popular with English performances. There is plenty of volume and bite to the orchestra which is conducted with Antal Dorati's accustomed vigor. The album has been reissued by Columbia with an attractive new cover.

VERDI (GIUSEPPE)

VERDI: *La Traviata-Ah! Fors' e lui. Bidu Sayao* (soprano in Italian) & Orchestra conducted by Erich Leinsdorf. 12" record (2 sides), No. C-71451D; price \$1.05.

The attractive Brazilian soprano sings in this record not only the aria *Ah! fors' e lui*, but also the preceding recitative *E strano* and the concluding recitative and rondo, *Follie! Follie!* and *Sempre libera*. Her voice is ideal for the role, for it is capable of a remarkable range, and has beauty of tone, color and phrasing. The aria is broad and lyrical while the rondo is brilliant, with difficult coloratura passages. Bidu Sayao's voice has been called too light for this role, but on the record it comes forth with brilliance and volume, without any indication of overamplification. This performance can be ranked with the great gramophonic performances of the acoustic days. The recording itself is spacious and clear.



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